

# **Saraswati and Sindhu : A Tale of Two Rigvedic Sisters**

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**Introduction:** During our school-days, many of us would have come across a very popular riddle, “ **I have two banks, but do not have Money in them. Identify, who am I?**” Though a **River** has no money in its bank, since ancient time as a water carrying channel, it has been providing life-giving support to all living things, and hence a river of particular region is also identified as the “**Lifeline of that Region**”. On the banks of many rivers of the world, several human civilizations /cultures have flourished in the past. Even today, we find many Cities and Towns are located on their banks, indicating their **Richness as the Givers** to one and all but without expecting anything in return.

**Rigved** clearly highlights importance of the rivers in the life of people of that time. Presence of names of several rivers in the text is the testimony of the same. There are around 25 rivers (small and big) mentioned in **Rigved**, and all ten mandalas reflect at least one river by name. The most celebrated rigvedic rivers are generally termed as the Seven Rivers/Sapta-Sindhus, and these include **Saraswati**, **Sutudri** (Sutlej), **Vipas** (Beas), **Parusni** (Ravi), **Asikni** (Chinab), **Vitasta** (Zhelum), and **Sindhu** (Indus). Among these seven rivers, **Saraswati** probably formed the eastern border of the region, and **Sindhu** became western boundary of it, and the land that existed between these two rivers got the rigvedic name as **Sapta-Sindhava**, but today popularly called as **Punjab** (present-day Punjab states of **India** and **Pakistan**). At some places in the literature, the rigvedic Priests have defined these seven rivers **together** as the **Seven Sisters/ Seven Mothers/ Seven Streams/ Seven Floods** as well. Out of these seven rivers, **Saraswati** and **Sindhu** are present in several mandalas, and hence in the present essay, some important characteristic features of these two rivers found in the text would be compared and discussed in more detail.

## **River Saraswati and River Sindhu:**

As **Saraswati** and **Sindhu** are the two rivers prominently figure in many mandalas of **Rigved**, and hence they form the main subject for the discussion of the present article.

Original meanings of the rigvedic terms “**Saraswati**” and “**Sindhu**” are given below;

**Saraswati:** Rigvedic word “**Saras**” means **fluid, water, lake** and term “**wati**” means **having**. A Combination of these two words make a single word **Saraswati** means "who has ponds, lakes, and pooling water" or “one with plenty of water”. Its practical meaning is “**Possessing Water**”.

**Sindhu:** Sanskrit word **Sindhu** has many meanings that are as under,

- **Sindhu** means any river (Common noun/ Generic term) or *Nadi* (in Sanskrit).
- **Sindhu** is applicable to **river Sindhu** (Proper noun/name of the river)
- **Sindhu** also means Ocean or Sea or a large Water body

The following paragraphs under different heads, would explain how the various rigvedic Priests in the text have poetically described these two important rivers, **Saraswati** and **Sindhu**.

### **I Hymns exclusively dedicated to Saraswati and Sindhu:**

There are three hymns devoted to river **Saraswati** in the **Early Mandalas** of **Rigved** (Mandala-2, 3,4, 6, and 7 are treated as the Early Mandalas), and they are- **Rv-6.61**; **Rv-7.95**; and **Rv-7.96**. But no such hymn is present in the **Late Mandalas** (Mandala-5, 8, 9, 1, and 10 are considered as the Late Mandalas).

In contrast, there is no single hymn dedicated to river **Sindhu** in all ten Mandalas of **Rigved**.

### **II. Verses specifically addressed to Saraswati and Sindhu:**

The mandala-wise verses that are addressed to **Saraswati** and **Sindhu** are given in **Table-1**. Please note that the information in the various tables has been arranged based on the consideration that the order of Composition Ten Rigvedic Mandalas is- **2, 3, 4 ,6, 7, 5, 8, 9, 1, and 10**.

**Table-1**

Mandala No.	Verses Addressed to river <b>Saraswati</b>	Verses inscribed river <b>Sindhu</b>
2	Three verse: Rv-2.41,16; 17; 18	-
4	-	Rv-4.43,6
6	Rv-6.49,7;	-
7	Rv-7.35,11 Rv-7.36,6	-
5	Rv-5.43,11	-
8		Rv-8.12,3 Rv-8.26,18
1	Two verse,:Rv-1.3,11 -12 Rv-1.164,49	Rv-1.27,6 Rv-1.65,3 Rv-1.126,1 Rv-1.186,5
10	Three verse : Rv-10.17,7; 8; 9 Rv-10.30,12 Rv-10.184,2	Seven verses in Rv-10.75, 1-4 and 7-9

### General Observations on Table-1:

1. By and large, the verses addressed to **Saraswati** are present in the both classes, the Early and the Late Mandalas of **Rigved**. In Mandala-4 the term **Saraswati** is totally absent.
2. As far as **Sindhu** is concerned, in the late mandalas (Mandala-8, 1, and 10), there are many verses addressed to it. Among the Early Mandalas, in Mandala-4 only a verse dedicated to **Sindhu** (Rv-4.43,6) makes its presence felt. In Mandala-4, river **Sindhu** has been designated as **He**, (Masculine Gender) possibly for its water flowing capacity, which is a very special thing implicitly explaining that river **Sindhu** is bigger and mightier than river **Saraswati**.

### III. Verses wherein Saraswati and Sindhu are invoked along with other Deities:

**Table-2** provides information on the verses composed by the Priests wherein various Deities are invoked along with these two rivers.

**Table-2**

Mandala No.	Verses mentioning <b>Saraswati</b> along with <b>other Deities and or their wives</b>	Verses mentioning river <b>Sindhu</b> along with <b>other Deities</b>
2	Rv-2.20,8 : Maruts, Indra Rv-2.32,8: Raka, Indrani, Vartunani	-
3	Rv-3.54,13: Maruts	-
4	-	Rv-4.54,6: Savitar, Indra, Heaven, Earth, Waters, Aditi, Aditya Rv-4. 55,3: Aditi, Svasti
6	Rv-6.50,12 : Rudra, Vishnu, Vayu, Rbhaksan, Vaja, Vidhatar, Parjanya, Vata Rv-6.52,6: Indra Parjanya, Agni	-
7	Rv-7.9,5: Maruts, Asvin, Waters Rv-7.35,11: All Gods Rv-7.39,5: Agni, Mitra, Varuna, Indra, Aditi, Visnu, Maruts Rv-7.40,3: Maruts, Agni	-
5	Rv-5.42.12: Vibhan, Brhaddiva , Raka Rv-5.46,2: Agni, Indra, Varuna, Mitra, Nasatya, Rudra, Pusan, Bhaga	-
8	Rv-8.38,9: Indra, Agni Rv-8.54,4: Pushan, Visnu, Vata, Parvata, Waters, Vanaspati, Earth Rv-8.98,4: Pushan, Visnu, Waters, Mountains, Forest-lord, Earth	Rv-8.25,12: Visnu Rv-8.25,14: Maruts, Asvin, Indra, Visnu
9	Rv-9.67,32: Pavamana Rv-9.81,4: Pushan, Pavamana, Varuna, Mitra, Maruts, Asvin , Vayu, Brhaspati, Savitar, Tvastar	Rv-9.97,58: Pavamana, Varuna, Mitra, Aditi, Heaven

1	Rv-1.89,3: Bhaga, Daksha, Mitra, Aditi, Varuna, Soma, Asvin	Rv-1.83,1: Indra <b>18</b> Verses of this mandala follow typical pattern of invoking several Deities with <b>Sindhu</b> in the last line of the Hymns i.e. Varuna, Mitra, Aditi, Earth, Heaven. These verses include- <b>Rv-1.94,16; 1.95,11; 1.96,9; 1.98,3; 1.100,19; 1.101,11; 1.102,11; 1.103,8; 1.105,19; 1.106,7; 1.108,13; 1.109,8; 1.110,9; 1.111,5; 1.112,25; 1.113,20; 1.114,11; 1.115,6</b> Rv-1.122,6: Varuna-Mitra
10	Rv-10.65,1: Agni, Indra, Varuna, Mitra, Vayu, Pushan, Aditya, Maruts, Visnu, Soma, Sky, Aditi, Rudra, Brahmanaspati. Rv-10.131,5: Asvin, Indra Rv-10.141,5: Indra, Brhaspati, Vata, Visnu, Savitar	Rv-10.111,10: Indra

#### General Observations on Table-2:

1. Except Mandala-4 where there is no **Saraswati** term, the verses wherein river **Saraswati** has been invoked with other Deities are more or less evenly spread out in the Early as well as the Late Mandalas of **Rigved**.
2. In case of river **Sindhu**, two verses from Mandala-4 and many verses of Late Mandalas (Mandala-8, 9, 1, 10) portray **Sindhu** getting invoked along with other Deities. Relatively higher concentration of the verses highlighting the river **Sindhu** in the Late Mandalas, indicates that the many generations of the composers would have lived on its banks. As the term **Sindhu** (proper name of river) is absent in Mandala-2, 3, 6, and 7, we do not find any verse dedicated to it.

#### IV. Verses describing Saraswati and Sindhu with other rivers:

**Table-3**

Verse number indicating mention of other Rivers with <b>Saraswati</b>	Verse number highlighting presence of other Rivers with <b>Sindhu</b>
Rv-3.23,6: Apaya, Drsadvati	Rv-5.53,9: Rasa, Krumu, Anitabha, Kubha, Sarayu
	Rv-8.20,25: Asikni
Rv-10.64,9: Sarayu with Saraswati and Sindhu together	
Rv-10.65,13: Both Sindhu and Saraswati appear with Purandhi but in two separate lines	
Rv-10.75,5-6: <b>Nadi-stuti Sukta</b> : Ganga, Yamuna, <b>Saraswati</b> , Sutudri, Parusni, Asikni, Marudvardha, Vitasta, Arjikyā, Srunuh, Susoma, Rasa, Sweta, <b>Sindhu</b> , Kubha, Gomati, Krumu, Mahitva,	

### General Observations on Table-3:

1. Rv-3.23,6 is the only verse of the Early Mandalas, in which with **Saraswati**, we find mention of two other rivers namely, Apaya, and Drsadvati who would have been the eastern tributaries of it.
2. In case of **Sindhu**, two verses from two different late Mandalas depict names of other rivers. A verse of Mandala-5 (Rv-5.53,9) exhibits presence of several rivers together, and another verse from Mandala-8 (Rv-8.20,25) takes **Sindhu** close to river **Asikni**.
3. In Mandala-10, first time in the Rigvedic Text, we notice that through two separate verses i.e. Rv-10.64,9; and Rv-10.65,13; the composers have presented two well known rivers of **Rigved** i.e. **Saraswati** and **Sindhu** together.
4. In the two verses of **Nadi-stuti Sukta** (Rv-10.75,5 and Rv-10.75,6), the Poet has brought together the major rivers of **Rigved** cleverly indicating **as if** in one literally stroke, starting with river **Ganga** of the east, and then systematically moving in the west direction, keeping a close watch on their **relative geographical positions**, by taking names of the rivers one by one from east to west, proposes **Vote of Thanks** to all of them.

### V. Saraswati in Apri-Suktas/ Apri Hymns:

There are total **Ten** Apri Hymns in **Rigved** and Mandala-wise their presence is shown in **Table-4**.

**Table-4**

Mandala Number	Hymn Number	Verse Number wherein names of other Goddesses appear with <b>Saraswati</b> in the order of their presence
2	Rv-2.3	Rv-2.3,8 : Saraswati, Ila, Bharati
3	Rv-3.4	Rv-3.4,8: Bharati, Ila, Saraswati
7	Rv-7.2	Rv-7.2,8: Bharati, Ila, Saraswati
5	Rv-5.5	Rv-5.5,8: Ila, Saraswati, Mahi
9	Rv-9.5	Rv-9.5,8: Bharati, Saraswati, Ila, Mahi
1	Rv-1.13 Rv-1.142 Rv-1.188	Rv-1.13,9: Ila, Saraswati, Mahi Rv-1.142,9: Bharati, Ila, Saraswati, Mahi Rv-1.188,8: Bharati, Ila, Saraswati
10	Rv-10.70 Rv-10.110	Rv-10.70,8: Ila with Three Goddesses, but not named Rv-10.110,8: Bharati, Ila, Saraswati

Additionally, there is a verse in Mandala-2 which is composition-wise very similar to verse 8 or 9 of the Apri Hymns of various mandalas, wherein we find mention of **Saraswati** along with the names of three other Goddesses (Aditi, Bharati, and Ila), and that verse (**Rv-2.1,11**) is given as

below;

**Rv-2.1,11:** tvamaghne **aditi**rdeva dāśuṣe tvam hotrā **bhāratī** vardhaseghirā |  
tvam**ilā** śatahimāsi dakṣase tvam vṛtrahā vasupate **sarasvatī** ||

**Griffith Translation** of afore stated verse is as under.

Thou, God, art **Aditi** to him who offers gifts: thou, Hotri, **Bharati**, art strengthened by the song.

Thou art the hundred-wintered **Ila** to give strength, Lord of Wealth! Vrtra-slayer and **Sarasvati**.

#### **General Observations on Table-4:**

1. Out of Ten mandalas, only seven mandalas exhibit presence of Apris Hymn.
2. Mandala-1 and 10 show presence of more than one Apris Hymns probably manifesting that these two mandalas would have been composed at the last (change in the established trend).
3. Mandala- 4, 6, and 8 do not contain Apri-Sukta in them, indicating that the earlier Lead Composers from Angirasa's clan (Vamadeva Gotama of Mandala-4, Bharadvaja of Mandala-6, and Kanva+ Angirases of Mandala-8) did not show interest in composition of Apris Hymns for their respective mandalas.
4. Except two verse of Mandala-1 i.e. Rv-1.13,9 and Rv-1.142,9, the composers of other Apris Hymns have purposely used **Verse no. 8** for addressing various Goddesses together.
5. A Verse, **Rv-2.1,11** would have served the baseline for the inclusion of various Goddesses in the composition of Apri-Suktas.
6. There is no direct mention of **Saraswati** only in the verse **Rv-10.70.8**, but the use of phrase, **Three Goddesses**, implies that it probably covers the name of **Saraswati** as well.
7. There is no place for **Sindhu** in any of the Apris Hymn.

#### **VI. Verses Containing Saraswati and Sindhu But Convey Other Important Aspects:**

There are some verses in **Rigved** that do contain names of the two distinguished rigvedic rivers, **Saraswati** and **Sindhu**, but communicate different features other than already mentioned in the paragraphs **I** to **V**. Two such examples are as under,

1. Two verses from Mandala-8, **Rv-8.21,17-18** convey that **Citra** is a small king who still lives on the bank of river **Saraswati**. It indirectly means that many famous persons/ powerful kings ( probably Purus) who would have dwelt earlier around **Saraswati**, have already gone to other places and the composer now requests **Indra** to provide Rain/**Parjanya** in that

region so that river **Saraswati** would flow and then King **Citra** would create enough wealth and treasure for himself and his people, hence would be interested to live there and perform worship as well.

2. In Mandala-10, a verse dedicated to Visvadevas, **Rv-10.137,2** explains that there are two types of winds (Vata) blowing in that region. One comes from **Sindhu** meant for breathing purpose, and another one from a long distance which is more powerful, drives away the diseases. It indirectly indicates that a cool **Breeze** coming from river **Sindhu** would be providing great relief to the Priests during daytime while performing Yajna, and the strong wind arriving from elsewhere would be keeping away the insects like House-Flies who cause diseases means give trouble or even deter the regular scavengers like the Dasas and Dasyus.

## VII. Special Notes:

1. Two verse of the Hymn of Mandal10 i.e Rv-10.75,5 and 6 that are popularly known as **Nadi-stuti Sukta** bring the major rigvedic rivers together. A close look at the complete hymn reveals that these two verses are sandwiched between the verses that praise river **Sindhu**. Hence, there is a strong possibility of late insertion of these two verses in the said hymn, and that would have occurred when the Priests got settled on the bank of river **Ganga**. If these two verses are taken out from the hymn (Rv-10.75), then it would automatically become only hymn of the rigvedic text addressed to river **Sindhu**.
2. A verse of **Mandala-9** wherein **Sindhu** has been lauded with other Deities is given below.

**Rv-9.97,58:** *tvayā vayam pavamānena soma bhare kṛtaṁ vi cinuyāma śaśvat |*  
*tan no mitro varuṇo māmahantāmaditiḥ **sindhuḥ** pṛthivīuta dyauḥ ||*

Same verse Translated by Griffith is as under,

*Soma, may we, with thee as Pavamana, pile up together all our spoil in battle.*

*This boon vouchsafe us Varuna and Mitra, and Aditi and **Sindhu**, Earth and Heaven.*

Total **18** verses from **Mandala-1** also show same trend of the composition, i.e irrespective of the total number of verses present in a particular hymn, in all the hymns mentioned below, it is in **the last line of the last verse**, wherein river **Sindhu** gets highlighted along with other Deities. The typical verses of Mandala-1 are, **Rv-1.94,16; 1.95,11; 1.96,9; 1.98,3; 1.100,19;**

1.101,11; 1.102,11; 1.103,8; 1.105,19; 1.106,7; 1.108,13; 1.109,8; 1.110,9; 1.111,5; 1.112,25; 1.113,20; 1.114,11; 1.115,6.

**Two examples of the typical verses of Mandala-1 are as given below,**

**a. Rv-1,94,16:** *sa tvamaghne saubhaghatvasya vidvānasmākamāyuh pra tirehadeva |  
tan no mitro varuṇo māmahantāmaditiḥ **sindhuḥ** pṛthivī uta dyauḥ ||*

Its Griffith Translation;

*Such, Agni, thou who knowest all good fortune, God, lengthen here the days of our existence.  
This prayer of ours may Varuna grant, and Mitra, and Aditi and **Sindhu**, Earth and Heaven*

**b. Rv-1.115,6:** *adyā devā uditā sūryasya niraṃhasaḥ pipṛtā naravadyāt |*

*tan no mitro varuṇo māmahantāmaditiḥ **sindhuḥ** pṛthivī uta dyauḥ*

Its Griffith Translation;

*This day, O Gods, while Surya is ascending, deliver us from trouble and dishonour.  
This prayer of ours may Varuna grant, and Mitra, and Aditi and **Sindhu**, Earth and Heaven.*

It means to say that **use of a set pattern** for the composition of a verse of Mandala-9, and 18 verses of Mandala-1, manifests that these hymns would have been composed either by same Poet or by the Poets of the same clan. Considering these verses together, as there is only one hymn in Mandala-9 (out of total 114 Hymns, only Hymn-97 exhibits this special feature), there is a strong possibility of Verse of Mandala-9 ( **Rv-9.97,58**) serving a template for the composition of **18** similar verses of **Mandala-1**. Based on this fact, now it can be safely concluded that **Mandala-9 would have been composed earlier to Mandala-1**.

Similar trend is also seen in case of Mandala-8 and 9. In Mandala-8, the term, **Pavamana** appears only once, that too, in the very late hymn (see Sanskrit verse **Rv-8.101,14**). But the word, **Pavamana** is found nearly 450 times in **Mandala-9**. Hence it can be said that Mandala-8 is predated to Mandala-9.

Therefore, the order of composition of the five Late Mandalas would be; 5, 8, 9, 1, and 10.

**3.** The very special rigvedic phrase, **Sapta-sindhavah** that represents the country or region wherein the seven important rigvedic rivers flow, and where the major portion of the five Early Mandalas is generally believed to have been composed, is found in the three verses of Late Mandalas only.

**Rv-8.54,4:** *pūṣā viṣṇurhavanaṃ me sarasvatyavantu **sapta sindhavaḥ** |  
āpo vātaḥ parvatāso vanaspatiḥ śṛṇotu pṛthivī havam ||*



**Rv-8.69,12:** sudevo asi varuṇa yasya te **sapta sindhavaḥ** |  
anukṣaranti kākudam sūrmyam suṣirām iva ||

**Rv-9.66,6:** taveme **sapta sindhavaḥ** praśiṣam soma sisrate |  
tubhyam dhāvanti dhenavaḥ ||

To indicate Seven rivers/ Sapta-Sindhu as a group, the Rigvedic Poets in their composition, have used similar terms and they are; Seven Sisters, Seven Mothers, Seven Streams, Seven Floods etc. Some of these terms are found in the Early Mandalas as well. But when some researchers found **Hapta Hendu** term in **Avestan** literature, initially they got confused, but then realized that it is linked with the Land of Aryans. Hence they concluded that **Hapta hendu** of **Avesta** is nothing but **Sapta sindhavaḥ** of **Rigved**.

**Mandala-8** tells us that **Anu** tribe was in **action** during its composition, but suddenly went missing from the subsequent Mandalas of **Rigved** i. e. Mandala-9, 1 and 10. In one verse of Mandala-1, (**Rv-1.108,8**), **Anus** just casually appear along with other four tribes (Yadus, Turvasas, Druhyus, Purus). Considering geographic locations of the composition of Mandala-8 and 9 (based on the presence of river **Sindhu** and its western tributaries in these mandalas) and taking into account of the unceremonious exit of the **Anus** from the text, in all probability, it is the **Anus** with some **Bhrigus** would have gone out of Indus Valley region and carried the memory of term, **Sapta sindhavaḥ** with them that got modified to **Hapta Hendu** in the Avestan literature (Vendidad) composed subsequently in the area of present-day Afghanistan.

## Final Remarks:

1. Although river **Saraswati** occupies prime position in four out of the Five **Early Mandalas**, and makes its presence felt in the **Late Mandalas** too, but the rigvedic Poets have also given due respect to river **Sindhu** in Mandala-4 (One of the Five Early Mandalas) and lauded it in all **Late Mandalas**.
2. Regular presence of river **Saraswati** as the Goddess in the various **Apris Hymns** clearly highlights the fact that except Mandala-4 composer, since beginning till end of the rigvedic period, **Saraswati** was very close to the hearts of the composers. This also manifests that since pre-rigvedic time, the ancestors of the rigvedic Priests would have lived on its banks and not on the bank of **Sindhu**. Rigvedic Priests got themselves relocated to west of river **Sindhu** after the War of Ten Kings only when they experienced severe water problem in the

Sapta-Sindhu region.

3. Rigvedic Poets have praised both, **Saraswati** and **Sindhu** along with several other rigvedic Deities in the separate verses of different Hymns, but have placed them together only in the three Hymns of the Last Mandala of **Rigved** i.e Mandala-10.
4. **Rigved** informs us that **Saraswati** has two main tributaries namely; Apaya and Drsadvati, but **Sindhu** has many, to include- Asikni, Sutudri (the main eastern tributaries who joined to form Punj-Nad River representing the five main rivers of present-day Punjab states of India and Pakistan), and the western tributaries like, Sarayu, Krumu, Gomati, Kubha, Rasa, Arjiky etc.
5. Presence of the verses specifically addressed to the rivers **Sindhu** and **Saraswati** in Mandala-1 and 10 (the Last two Mandalas) clearly provides clues for the **active reference of Yajnas** being conducted on the banks of both rivers and hence, also manifests the movement of the Priests first from west to east, then east to west, and finally from west to far east ( Yamuna-Ganga region). This can be termed as the **Transition Period of Rigved**.
6. Transfer of the names of some rigvedic rivers from west to east such as **Sarayu**, **Gomati** to the unknown rivers of East, and **Saraswati** joining the confluence of river **Ganga** and **Yamuna** as a hidden river, would have occurred after the rigvedic period.

## References:

1. “ Rig Veda”(Bilingual), Translated by Ralph T. H. Griffith (1896) in PDF format
2. Rig Veda ( Griffith Translation)-Table of Content, Alphabetical frequency etc. from the

Intra text Digital Library available on [www.Intratext .com](http://www.Intratext.com)

## Indra and His Miraculous acts

When it is well known that **Indra**, the **Supreme Deity** of the rigvedic Priests, the very spectacular and invisible character of **Rigved** is a pure myth, then for all practical purposes, the following important but magical actions of **Indra** mentioned in the rigvedic text need to be considered as the imaginary only,

1. Indra drinks Soma and the gets revitalized.
2. Indra uses Vajra, kills dragon Vritra or Ahi and gets released waters from his captive.

3. Indra creates rain upon invoking.
4. Indra subdues the Dasas and Dasyus.
5. Indra demolishes the forts or castles of Vritra, Dasas and Dasyus.
6. Indra locates caves of Panis and gets back the stolen Cows of Angirases from them.
7. Indra destroys stone cave of Vala and slaughters him to get released the Cows.
8. Indra rescues Yadu and Turvasa from drowning in the floods.
9. Indra rides on the Chariot drawn by the Bay steed, travels anywhere in the space.
10. Indra helps Bharatas during the Wars including the War of Ten Kings.

First **Outguessing** the problem, and then **Overacting** to resolve it are the very special qualities of **Indra** described in **Rigved** but can be called as the lofty imaginations of the Poets. The wonders of **Indra** reported by the rigvedic Poets can be defined with a proverb, “**If Wishes were Horses.....**” or to suit the occasion, same can be modified to “**If Wishes were Rigvedic Horses.....**”.